



MEDIA RELEASE

Residents Urged to Store Untreated Pine, Report Signs of European House Borer

Perth, 28 August 2007 – Local residents are being urged to store away untreated pine and report any suspected signs of European House Borer (EHB), as flight season for the quarantine pest approaches.

From September to March, EHB larvae turn into beetles and can fly to find seasoned, untreated pine for the female to lay eggs into. The resultant larvae can cause serious damage by tunnelling through the wood.

The Department of Agriculture and Food's EHB Response has launched a new campaign to increase public awareness of the destructive pest, including information on how to assist with containment and eradication efforts. The campaign theme of "listen, look, call" will feature in advertising and direct mail to affected householders.

"We're asking people in affected areas to listen for unusual scraping sounds made by the borer as it feeds in pine timber, to look for beetles and their exit holes and to call the EHB hotline to report any suspected EHB activity," said EHB Response Director John van Schagen.

"We're also asking that untreated pine be stored away, and that waste pine be destroyed or disposed of before the beginning of EHB flight season in September."

Storing untreated pine properly is key to containing the pest. Placing untreated pine items such as sawn timber, pallets or furniture inside a fully-enclosed shed or securely wrapping items in plastic until the end of summer helps reduce the risk of spreading EHB during flight season.

While untreated pine can be sealed or stored away safely, it is recommended that waste pine be destroyed. This can be done by chipping it into pieces smaller than 100cm³ (about one third the size of a soft drink can), burning it during permitted burning times or disposing of it through the council waste disposal system.

EHB was first identified in Perth in January 2004. Since then, EHB Response has inspected nearly 60,000 Perth properties and 300,000 hectares of pine plantations for the pest. There are 120 infested sites in total, centred around two main clusters – the Mundaring Hills and the Gnangara/Ellenbrook area, including nine pine plantations. Plantation removal in affected areas adjacent to housing is planned.

More information about European House Borer is available online at www.ehb.wa.gov.au or by calling the Freecall Hotline at **1800 084 881**.

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Picture attachment: Residents are urged to store pine away and report signs of European House Borer, including larvae, beetles or exit holes.